SEIU DISASTER PROGRAM RESOURCE MANUAL FOR LOCAL UNIONS

SEIU
Stronger Together

IN 2018, SEIU established a Disaster Relief Committee of local union leaders to consider ways to expand the union's capacity to serve our members, our employers, and our communities during times of crisis. The Committee's charge was to help create an ongoing SEIU disaster preparedness and response program. One of the Committee's recommendations was to create this Disaster Program Resource Manual for Local Unions. This manual is based on the experience of a number of SEIU local unions, leaders and members, other labor organizations, and public and private emergency preparedness and response agencies.

Purpose

The purpose of this resource manual is to provide SEIU local unions with guidance and resources for developing or expanding their disaster preparedness and response programs.

SEIU Experience with Disasters

Many SEIU local unions respond to local and national emergencies (both natural and man-made), to help their members, their families, and the public. SEIU's responses take place at our member's workplaces, homes, and communities. SEIU members and their families have been harmed during numerous natural disasters, including hurricanes, flooding, wildfires, and earthquakes. SEIU members and their families have also been affected by man-made disasters such as terrorist attacks and chemical releases in their communities and in their workplaces.

Impact of Climate Change

Climate change is causing more frequent and extreme weather events (such as hurricanes and tornadoes, wildfires, heat and cold waves, flooding and drought). The changing climate also facilitates the spread of diseases and epidemics such as Zika, Malaria, Dengue, and waterborne infections. Overall, the cost in lives lost, lives affected, and property destroyed is skyrocketing. If your local union has an environmental justice or climate justice committee, it would be helpful to keep in touch with them and consider coordinating disaster preparedness and response activities, whenever possible.

SEIU Responses to Disasters

- The SEIU International Union, local unions, and the SEIU Nurse Alliance have a long history of providing support to members and their families and communities after disasters:
- The SEIU International Union and many local unions collect donations for disaster funds to provide aid to members affected by disasters.
- Many local unions provide food and housing assistance and also help members gain disaster relief from state and Federal agencies.
- Some local unions have negotiated with their employers to protect member's jobs, pay and health and safety, during and after disasters.
- SEIU International Union and local unions

have supported SEIU volunteer nurses, physicians, and other members who travel to distant communities in the United States and abroad to help with disaster recovery efforts.

The Role for Local Unions in the Disaster Response System in the United States

The focus of disaster preparedness and response in the United States is local. Disasters occur first at the local level and affect local people. These localized impacts can then cascade to have regional and national ramifications. There exists an interacting network of public and private institutions at the local, state, and federal levels to prepare and respond to disasters. If a local government is unable to handle a disaster on its own, it notifies the state and asks for state or federal assistance.

There are generally three stages to disasters – preparedness before a disaster, the response to a disaster, and the recovery from the disaster. Union involvement is usually focused on the disaster response and recovery stages. Labor unions and their members are rarely involved in emergency planning and decision-making, despite the fact that they have valuable knowledge, experience and skills.

Local union disaster programs can take on many valuable roles in preparedness beforehand, during an emergency, and in the recovery afterwards. Depending on the needs, interest, and capacity of your local union, some of these roles could be:

1. Roles within the local union

- Help prepare your local union for a disaster that affects your union offices and facilities, records and files, communications, and the ability to contact and represent your members.
- Help prepare members and their families for disasters, by providing information on planning and emergency supplies.
- Assist members with opportunities to volunteer for disaster recovery in your local and distant communities.

2. Roles at workplaces

- Involve union leaders and members in employer preparedness planning.
- Involve union leaders and members in disaster training and exercises.
- Advocate for safe staffing levels, worker training, safety equipment and tools, so workers can do their jobs safely and effectively during responses to emergencies
- Address mental health issues for workers affected by disasters (such as post-traumatic stress disorders).
- Negotiate collective bargaining language or MOUs to address issues affecting our members during disasters.

3. Roles within communities

- Partner with local public and private organizations involved in local disasters.
- Build on existing partnerships and create new partnerships with public agencies and private organizations.
- Increase the visibility of local unions and our members.

Some local unions disaster programs are involved locally, in the workplaces and communities of our members, and some local unions also assist with disaster recovery in distance communities.

In order to assist local unions who have members seeking volunteer opportunities, SEIU and the SEIU Nurse Alliance have established a partnership with the nonprofit International Medical Corps to send volunteer nurses and other first responders to areas hit by emergencies and natural disasters in the United States and abroad. For more on this partnership, see section 9, page 19.

KEY ELEMENTS FOR A LOCAL UNION DISASTER PROGRAM

The following are key elements for beginning and expanding your local union's disaster program. These elements are described in the following pages, along with additional resources and ideas to assist you. Examples of activities already undertaken by some SEIU local unions and other unions are also highlighted under each element.

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1. ESTABLISHING YOUR DISASTER PROGRAM

☑ Establish a local union disaster preparedness and response program. This is an internal union program, composed of union members only, that reports to your local union leadership and could coordinate with other local union programs and committees, such as environmental justice, communications, and education.

- **Start small.** It may take a while to develop a program that has workers from every work area and every shift. Two or three active, involved people will make a great start. See element 2 on page 7 for ideas on recruiting member volunteers.
- **Start slowly.** Begin with a project that matches the interests and skills of the members and that can be completed readily.
- **Provide education.** Find training for members who are interested and are willing to put in time. See element 3 on page 8 for suggestions for training and preparing members.
- **Keep meetings short and well-organized.** Meetings should take place at a convenient time and place, and there should be a set agenda. Stick to the agenda, give out assignments with timelines, and adjourn the meeting on time.
- **Recognize achievements.** This can include tokens of appreciation from the union (such as a certificate or t-shirt) or special mention at local meetings or in the local's social media site.

☑ Decide on your initial scope of work. Will you work just within your local union, or also at your worksites or in your community? See element 7 on page 14 and element 8 on page 15 for working with our employers and contract language. See element 9 on page 18 for working with community partners.

☑ Do you plan to send member volunteers to disaster recovery in other communities? If so, see element 10 on page 19 to learn about the SEIU partnership with the International Medical Corps to coordinate this.

☑ There are many disaster preparedness and response resources that can be helpful to your program. Two good ones are:

- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) https://www.fema.gov (use the navigation button at the top left of the website to access a large collection of documents and resources).
- The Federal Emergency Management Agency coordinates the federal government's role in preparing for, preventing, mitigating the effects of, responding to, and recovering from all domestic disasters, whether natural or man-made, including acts of terror. In 2003, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS).
- National Clearinghouse for Worker Safety and Health Training https://tools.niehs.nih.gov/wetp/ The National

Clearinghouse for Worker Safety and Health Training is a national resource for hazardous waste worker curricula, technical reports, and weekly news on emergency response and hazardous materials. The Clearinghouse is funded by the NIEHS Worker Training Program (WTP) to provide technical assistance to WTP staff, NIEHS training providers, unions, employers, government and private agencies, and the public.

AN EXAMPLE OF SEIU LOCAL UNION PROJECTS

The Union Resiliency Coordinators Programs of SEIU Local 511 and 1199SEIU

After Hurricane Sandy, SEIU Local 511, Connecticut Employees Union Independent (CEUI) and 1199SEIU piloted the Union Resiliency Coordinators Program (URC) to improve their disaster preparedness. The URC Program goal was to empower front-line workers to take actions necessary to improve preparedness for emergencies through their local union, at their workplaces, and in their communities.

SEIU Local 511 URC volunteers

Union Resiliency Coordinators were volunteers, trained by their union, to push their employers to involve front-line workers in the development and review of policies and plans for emergencies, including:

- Front-line worker training on their roles before, during and after disasters.
- Plans to protect workers, patients, and community health and safety.
- Other workplace issues, such as the housing of workers at workplace facilities during disasters.

To learn more about this work, read page 36 of the report from the 2015 Hurricane Sandy Conference: Translating Research into Practice. This report is available on-line at:

https://www.phe.gov/Preparedness/planning/science/research-conference/Documents/sandy-grantee-program.pdf

2. RECRUITING MEMBER VOLUNTEERS

- ☑ Recruit members who are especially interested in disaster preparedness and response issues and who will be champions for the program.
- ☑ Look for members with prior experience. Look for members with US military, military reserve and State National Guard training and experience; and look for members with experience volunteering for disaster recovery with the Red Cross, their church or other community organizations.
- ☑ Locals unions with public sector members, could reach out to those working for State or local emergency management agencies, public health departments, and other agencies involved in disaster preparedness and response activities.
- ☑ Consider approaching inactive members or even non-members (who will need to join the union before participating in the program). Sometimes non-members are surprised that the union is engaged on this issue and will join and support this union program.
- ☑ Over time, try to expand beyond the core members and strive to have the program represent the workplace in terms of age, gender, race, job titles, and work units.
- ☑ Look for a variety of skills, such as being bilingual, having training experience, and other skills that can be valuable help to your disaster work.

An Example of SEIU Local Union Member Volunteers

SEIU Local 721 has two members with a great deal of experience with disaster preparedness and response work. These members are also assisting the SEIU Nurse Alliance of California and SEIU local unions with disaster training.

Shamika Ossey, RN, BSN, PHN, currently serves as a SEIU 721 Union Steward and is Co-Chair of SEIU 721's Bargaining Unit 311 (LA County Registered Nurses). She is also Co-Chair of LA County Department of Public Health's RN Joint Labor Management Committee. Ms. Ossey volunteers her time conducting emergency and disaster preparedness education and training and has been a volunteer with the American Red Cross Los Angeles Region since 2014. She founded and is the Co-Program Manager of the Watts Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program, which has received national recognition and awards.

Sharon Sylvers-Sidney, RN, BSN, PHN, MPA, is currently the Vice Chair for the first SEIU DPH RN Joint Labor Management Committee. She is a Public Health Nurse for Los Angeles County Department of Public Health. She volunteers as a Community Engagement and Resilience Consultant for the Watts Labor Community Action Committee (WLCAC), and volunteers as a CERT instructor. Sharon has a passion for community work that focuses primarily on youth preparedness and community engagement. She has planned, coordinated and implemented CERT training for over 500 youth and adults inunderserved communities in South Los Angeles.

3. TRAINING AND PREPARING MEMBERS FOR DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE WORK

☑ **Provide training for your program members in preparedness and response concepts and procedures.**

- If your local has an education department and/or Joint Labor-Management Training Fund, check with them to learn what disaster-related training they do or could provide.
- Contact your local Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program, which trains volunteers on disaster preparedness for the hazards that may impact their area. A CERT program can provide training in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. SEIU local 32BJ offers CERT training in partnership with the New York City Office of Emergency Management. After graduating, volunteers support their local communities by assisting with emergency education and response.
- The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) coordinates the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program as a grassroots initiative which is structured so that local and state program managers have the flexibility to form their programs in the way that best suits their communities. CERT volunteers are trained to respond safely, responsibly, and effectively to emergency situations, and can also support their communities during non-emergency events as well. CERT volunteers are trained on disaster preparedness for the hazards that may impact their area and receive training in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. CERT offers a consistent, nationwide approach to volunteer training and organization that professional responders can rely on during disaster situations, which allows them to focus on more complex tasks. There are over 2,700 local CERT programs nationwide. More than 600,000 individuals have been trained since CERT became a national program. For more on the CERT Program, go to their website at https://www.ready.gov/community-emergency-response-team
- Check with your local American Red Cross for their disaster response training or check our their website at https://www.redcross.org/take-a-class/disaster-training. Training is conducted in-person and some classes are on-line.

☑ **Because disaster response activities can be hazardous, your program members should know the potential dangers involved and be provided with the proper training and equipment to ensure their health and safety.**

- The National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) Worker Training Program (WTP) has developed a number of very good training booklets and other resources to assist in disaster preparedness and response training. These materials can be used in training

your members and also used to provide information and training to your local union members and their families. The booklets address a variety of disasters. Some are available in multiple languages. Booklets are available on the WTP website at https://tools.niehs.nih.gov/wetp/index.cfm?id=556

- The NIEHS WTP also supports a national network of training providers that conduct disaster response and safety and health training for workers. WTP training providers include labor union training programs, communities colleges, university and community-based organizations. More information on the NIEHS WTP can be found on their website at https://www.niehs.nih.gov/careers/hazmat/awardees/index.cfm. Two NIEHS WTP training providers who have worked with SEIU locals are;

  1. *The ICWUC Center for Worker Health and Safety Education https://hsed.icwuc.org/*

  The International Chemical Workers Union Council (ICWUC) Center for Worker Health and Safety Education in Cincinnati, Ohio, and its multi-union consortium have built a nationally-recognized training program. The ICWUC conducts training for a wide range of collateral duty emergency responders and disaster workers and for the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) workers. The ICWIC Center conducts training across the nation and has conducted training for SEIU locals for many years .

  2. *Western Region Universities Consortium (WRUC) conducts training in California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Alaska, Arizona, and Nevada https://losh.ucla.edu/about-us/wruc/*

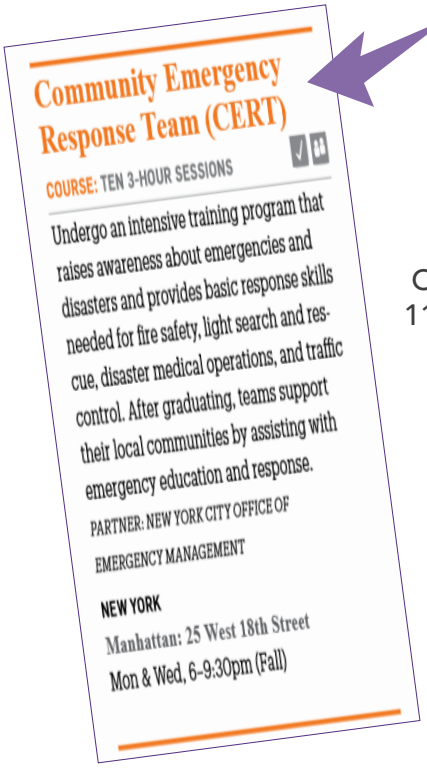
  WRUC trainings are provided by the University of California, Los Angeles Labor Occupational Safety and Health Program (UCLA-LOSH); the University of California, Berkeley Labor Occupational Health Program (UCB-LOHP); the Arizona State University Fulton Schools of Engineering Environmental & Resource Management Program (ASU); and the University of Washington Northwest Center for Occupational Health & Safety (UW). UCLA-LOSH and UCB-LOHP have worked with and conducted training for SEIU locals in California for many years.

☑ Participate in emergency response drills conducted in your community. As your committee gains experience, participate in the planning of drills, so that both worker and union perspectives are included.

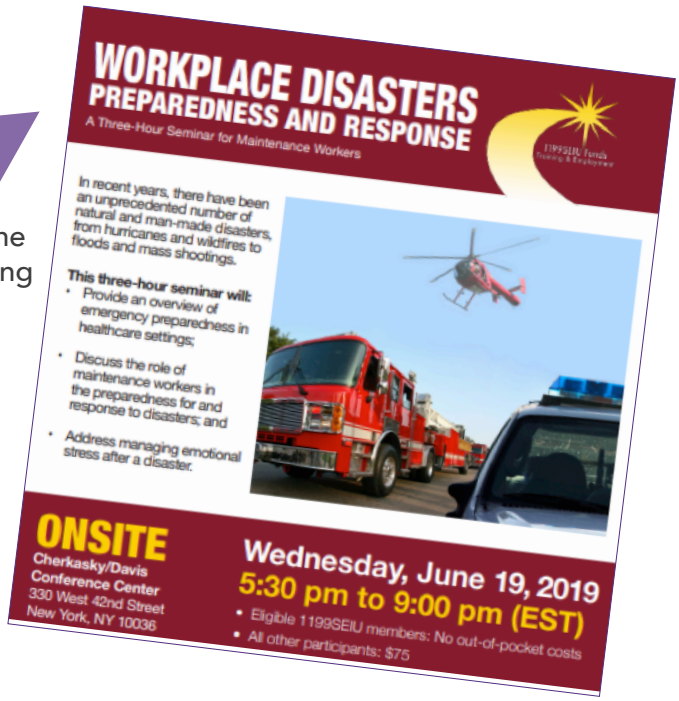
☑ Create your own drills to test your committee. A simple drill is to test your communication system to notify your committee members or local union leaders and staff, in case of emergencies.

Examples of SEIU Disaster Related Training

Offering from the 32BJ SEIU Training Fund


Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)
COURSE: TEN 3-HOUR SESSIONS
Undergo an intensive training program that raises awareness about emergencies and disasters and provides basic response skills needed for fire safety, light search and rescue, disaster medical operations, and traffic control. After graduating, teams support their local communities by assisting with emergency education and response.
PARTNER: NEW YORK CITY OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
NEW YORK
Manhattan: 25 West 18th Street
Mon & Wed, 6–9:30pm (Fall)

Offering from the 1199 SEIU Training Fund


WORKPLACE DISASTERS
PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE
A Three-Hour Seminar for Maintenance Workers
In recent years, there have been an unprecedented number of natural and man-made disasters, from hurricanes and wildfires to floods and mass shootings.
This three-hour seminar will:
Provide an overview of emergency preparedness in healthcare settings;
Discuss the role of maintenance workers in the preparedness for and response to disasters; and
Address managing emotional stress after a disaster.
ONSITE
Cherkasky/Davis Conference Center
330 West 42nd Street
New York, NY 10036
Wednesday, June 19, 2019
5:30 pm to 9:00 pm (EST)
Eligible 1199SEIU members: No out-of-pocket costs
All other participants: $75

SEIU United Service Workers West's Building Skills Partnership Training Fund to conducting emergency preparedness training for airport service workers at LAX

In 2018, SEIU-United Service Workers West (USWW) members won a groundbreaking partnership on emergency response with LAX, the nation's second busiest airport, to train front-line airport service workers to respond effectively in any type of emergency situation. SEIU-USWW's award-winning training fund, the Building Skills Partnership (BSP) will developed and conduct a 16-hour training program for members on worktime.

LAX is the first airport in the country to implement a fully-defined emergency response program to equip thousands of airport workers to respond in cases of extreme weather, active shooters, terrorist attacks and other emergencies.

According to David Huerta, president of SEIU-USWW, "In times of crisis, airport workers are on the front lines, we saw that in 2013 during the TSA shooting when our members provided vital assistance to travelers. Not only was a passenger service agent the first to make a call alerting police about the shooter, many workers played a significant role guiding passengers to safe areas, helping evacuate disabled passengers and providing comfort during the wait. This program will help make our members be more effective in this critical role which is why we are pleased to be partnering with the airport authority and employers to develop this training."

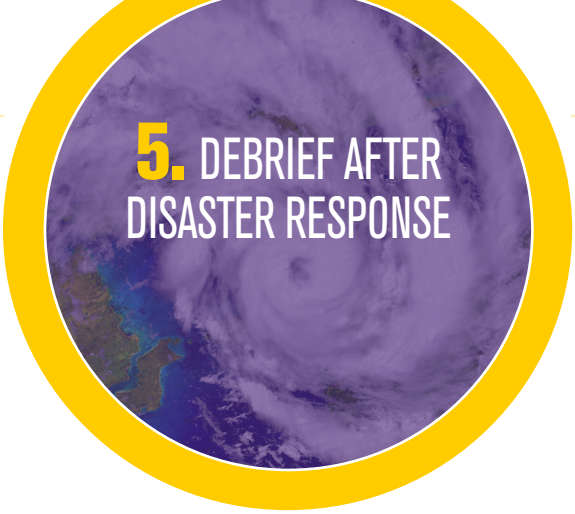
4. COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR DISASTER PROGRAM MEMBERS, LOCAL LEADERS AND UNION MEMBERS

☑ Keep in touch with your union leaders and members so they understand the work of your program and let them know you welcome their ideas and support.

- If possible, regularly provide emergency preparedness information for members and their families.
- Some ideas for communicating with union members include brown bag lunches, articles in your local newsletter or on the union website or Facebook page, sending e-mails, conducting surveys, and having one-on-one conversations.
- Developing good working relationships is crucial to effective emergency response. Members of your program should meet regularly get to know each other, to discuss issues, concerns and ideas, and to make plans for projects.
- It is very important that your program keep in close touch with your union leaders and staff. You want to check that issues you are raising are not being worked on by others in the union and are in line with union policy or union strategy. Remember, your program will need your union's support to be successful.
- If your local has a communications department or staff, check with them on how best to work together.

☑ Develop capabilities to communicate with your local union members during and after disasters. One of the most immediate and significant impacts of many disasters is the sudden and wide-scale interruption of communications infrastructure. Disaster communications are critical to your union to account for members, prevent panic, publicize helpful advice, coordinate response, advocate for affected members, and to mobilize resources. Disaster communications plans should include but are not limited to the following:

- A database of current contact information for committee members, union leaders and staff, and union members
- Draft materials in multiple languages on anticipated FAQ's and resources
- A database of locally trusted sources of information, such as emergency services, utilities, service providers, medical providers, and other services.
- The development of a social media strategy in coordination with your local union's communication program.
- If your local has a communication program, work with them on ways to use or adapt existing tools for contacting union members during and after disasters. Many locals are using smart phone technology and applications (apps). Two apps used by SEIU locals are a blast text communications tool called Revere Messaging, and a peer to peer texting option called Purple Spoke.
- Hustle is a phone app used successfully by some AFT local unions to keep in touch with their members after disasters. Learn more at Hustle at http://aftct.org/Jan_19_Hustle_text_training



5. DEBRIEF AFTER DISASTER RESPONSE

☑ It is very valuable to debrief soon after all disaster responses, including drills and exercises, to learn lessons and improve your program.

- Conduct and record your own debrief with your program members, union leaders, and local members. For a simple debrief, list and discuss *what went well and what could have been done differently.*
- Participate in debriefs conducted by employers or community partners, if possible. These are sometimes called after-action reports. Often employers include only managers in workplace emergency response debriefs. Worker and union voices should be a part of every debrief.
- If you are not able to participate in an employer's debrief, your local can request the written report from the debrief from the employer. Then you can review and compare to your union debrief.

☑ Union members involved in emergency response may experience physical and emotional trauma from their experience. Everyone involved in response efforts should know this is a normal and common result of this work. Everyone should be alert to this possibility during and after emergencies.

- Training and information about the signs of emotional and physical trauma and the options for support should be provided to all program members and other involved in disaster responses. This training is commonly called resiliency training.
- Use a "buddy system" to monitor fellow program members and others for early signs of trauma, and to support each other. This is covered in good resiliency training.
- Resiliency training helps prepare emergency responders to recognize trauma and to quickly recover. A very good resiliency training program is:

NIEHS WTP Responder & Community Resilience Training

https://tools.niehs.nih.gov/wetp/index.cfm?id=2528

This resiliency training was developed by the NIEHS WTP with support from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). This training was designed to address unmet mental health and resilience needs identified following multiple disasters.

Three unique sets of awareness-level training materials are available to educate and empower persons impacted by disasters to:

- recognize signs and symptoms of disaster work-related trauma.
- obtain support through an employer/ organization or community resources.
- build resilience by understanding stress reduction and coping strategies.

These training materials are available from the NIEHS WTP website link provided above and currently include materials for workers and supervisors, in both English and Spanish, and for disaster care providers, in English. The disaster care provider training was created for nurses, physicians, social workers, and other health care staff who interact with disaster-impacted populations. This training would be useful for local unions planning to send volunteers to help with distant disaster recovery.

6. HELPING PREPARE YOUR LOCAL UNION

☑ Your local union should have a plan for operating during a disaster in your community and for recovery after the disaster. The damage that may be caused to your local union office and operations will need to be addressed quickly. In disaster preparedness, this is known as Continuity of Operations Planning (COOP). This could be a good early project of your local union disaster program.

- First, become familiar with continuity of operations planning using the FEMA and other agencies resources listed below.
- Next, check with your local union leaders to find out if this planning as already been done. If it has, volunteer to have your disaster committee review it, as practice, and as a test of the plan.
- If this planning has not been done or is not complete, your local union leadership could have your disaster committee take this on.

☑ Continuity of Operations Planning (COOP) for local unions should include:

- Creating back-up files of information needed if the union office is destroyed. Both computer and paper records of importance should be updated, duplicated and stored in a location away from the office in a secure place that would not likely be affected by the same event.
- Signing up local union member volunteers willing to help in an emergency and create a local union database or volunteer call list with phone numbers and e-mail addresses. Collect information such as which members have special skills or equipment, who speaks a foreign language, who can drive a large truck, who can cook on scale, who can "sign" for the deaf, etc. In the event of an emergency, these volunteers can help your local provided needed help to fellow union members and their families.

Examples of SEIU local union planning to continue operating during and after a disaster:

7. WORKING WITH OUR EMPLOYERS

☑ Employers should have emergency response plans for small and large events which could impact their workplaces and workers. OSHA requires employers to protect workers from health and safety hazards that can occur during and after disasters. Most employer coordinate their plans with local community emergency preparedness and response efforts, led by local government emergency management agencies.

☑ Your union and your program can address worksite emergency issues without a partnerships with your employers, using your existing union tools to deal with emergency issues and resolving problems.

☑ If your program and local union decided to engage in a labor-management project around emergency issues, it may be helpful first to read the training manual written for the Maine State Employees Association (MSEA), SEIU Local 1989, titled Representing Your Co-workers: A guide to Union Participation in Labor – Management Committees. This manual is available on-line at https://tinyurl.com/RepresentingYourMembers\

☑ If you are working with your employer, it is very important that your program keep in close touch with your union leaders and staff. You want to be sure that the issues you are raising are not being addressed elsewhere and are consistent with union policies or strategies.

☑ If you are working with your employer, be watchful that your union participation is acknowledged, when appropriate, in announcements, reports and at events. This is especially important when the employer also works with community partners who many not be familiar with unions and labor-management projects.

☑ During emergencies, most workers face the same hazards as during routine operations, such as blood-borne pathogens and needle sticks, back injuries, chemical exposure, and violence. But during emergencies, workers will face additional safety, hazards. The risk of a worker being injured or made ill also increases during emergencies due to:

- The stress of the situation (an emergency response can be as emotionally anguishing as it is physically punishing).
- The increased workload and longer work hours (made worse by staff shortages that often accompanying emergencies).
- New hazards associated with the emergency or emergency response may be encountered, as workers do tasks outside their routine work, location and training.

☑ A good resource for your program is titled, Are You Prepared? A Guide to Emergency Planning in the Workplace, available on-line at https://www.afscme.org/news/publications/workplace-health-and-safety/are-you-prepared-a-guide-to-emergency-planning-in-the-workplace

- This publication is intended to help AFSCME members and staff take a proactive approach to dealing with these and other potential situations. The information contained in this booklet will help members and staff ensure that their employers are taking all necessary and reasonable measures to plan and prepare for emergencies.

8. CONTRACT LANGUAGE FOR DISASTERS

☑ Your union could consider negotiating collective bargaining language or MOUS to support your disaster work. The following is contract language taken from some SEIU local unions and other unions, and sample language related to emergency preparedness and response issues.

Hours of Work and Leave

Catastrophic Leave - Natural Disaster
Upon request of an employee and upon approval of a department director or designee, leave credits (vacation, personal leave, annual leave, personal day, and/or holiday credit) shall be transferred from one or more employees to another employee, in accordance with departmental policies, under the following conditions: when the receiving employee faces financial hardship due to the effect of the natural disaster on the employee's principal residence;

SEIU Local 1000

Catastrophic Leave - Emergencies
If the District Superintendent/President or his/her designee orders the campus evacuated or any part thereof evacuated in response to an emergency, unit members shall not suffer a loss of pay during the period of such evacuation but shall remain available for immediate return to work after clearance for return to the work station for the remainder of their work shifts.

California School Employees Association Santa Monica Community College District Chapter, American Federation of Teachers

Disaster Deployment Statement of Understanding
The parties acknowledge that all FEMA employees are subject to recall around the clock for emergency management operations which may require irregular work hours, work at locations other than the official duty station, and may include duties other than those specified in the employee's official position description.

American Federation of Government Employees contract with FEMA

Disaster/Emergency Vacation Donation
Management will establish a policy that permits bargaining unit employees to donate their accrued vacation time to other employees who are on 'disaster /emergency leave,' as affected parties or as volunteers.

Sample Language

Pay for Unplanned Workplace Shutdown Due to Disaster/Emergency
In the event employees arrive to work as scheduled, but find their workplace shutdown, these employees will be paid for the full shift,

Sample Language

Disaster Emergency Leave Time
Management shall not unreasonably deny workers who request to take time off to participate in a response to a natural disaster or public health emergency.

Sample Language

Union Representation

The parties acknowledge that while on disaster deployment, all FEMA bargaining unit employees shall have the same rights and privileges accorded them while at their permanent duty station. Where practical and feasible, these rights shall extend to access to a union official and representation.

American Federation of Government Employees contract with FEMA

Information to Union

The Employer will provide the Union with a copy of all facility disaster preparedness and response plans, including personnel policies and administrative rules and regulations that are applicable to the bargaining unit roles in the plans

Adapted from SEIU Local 1991 Work Assignments

Disaster Deployment Statement of Understanding

The parties acknowledge that all FEMA employees are subject to recall around the clock for emergency management operations which may require irregular work hours, work at locations other than the official duty station, and may include duties other than those specified in the employee's official position description.

American Federation of Government Employees contract with FEMA

Each site shall have a Safety Coordinator selected by the site administrator from among volunteers. The Safety Coordinator shall receive compensation in an amount equal to 2.2 Role and Recompense Units (Appendix B5). 5.6.2 The duties of the Safety Coordinator shall include working with the site administrator and faculty to insure implementation of the District Disaster Preparedness Master Plan.

California School Employees Association Santa Monica Community College District Chapter, American Federation of Teachers

Union Involvement

Union-Management will meet within 72 hours to discuss ways in which the employer and employees can provide support (such as donating supplies, coordination of employees to provide on the ground support and deployment to the disaster).

Sample Language

The local union shall be involved annually, in the facility's :

- Review of the risk assessment and emergency plans, in risk assessment and emergency plan reevaluations and update, including lessoned learned after specific emergency events.
- Review of policies and procedures based on the emergency plan and risk assessment and any revisions to these policies and procedures.
- Review emergency preparedness communication plan and in emergency preparedness communication plan reevaluations and update.
- Review of emergency preparedness training and testing programs, including drills and exercises to test the emergency plan and any revisions to training and testing programs, drills and exercises.

Sample Language

Labor-Management Committees

The Labor-Management Disaster preparedness and response committee shall have the authority to make recommendations to the emergency planning department to modify existing facility plans, based on lessons learned from prior events at this or other similar facilities.

Adapted from SEIU Local 1991

The Employer and the Union shall establish a Labor/Management Emergency Response Committee. The committee shall be composed of an equal number of representatives appointed by the Employer and the Union and shall be co-chaired by a Union and an Employer

representative. The general responsibility of the committee will be to promote safe and effective disaster preparedness and response for facility and in the local community.

Sample Language

The District shall maintain a safety and health committee and an emergency preparedness committee. The exclusive representative shall have the right to appoint a total of four representatives from the bargaining unit to the safety and health committee and two representatives to the emergency preparedness committee. The safety and health committee and the emergency preparedness committee shall hold regular meetings and may issue such reports as deemed necessary by the respective committee.

Unit members who are members of the safety and health committee or the emergency preparedness committee shall be permitted to attend such committee meetings during their regular duty hours without loss of compensation. Unit members shall also be granted released time to prepare for safety and health or emergency preparedness committee meetings in accordance with Article 16.

California School Employees Association
Santa Monica Community College District Chapter,
American Federation of Teachers

Safety and Health

The Agency shall maintain an awareness of extreme weather considerations and the condition of employees operating within their span of control during emergencies and training and ensure that adequate steps are taken to provide for their safety and health.

If there is an emergency situation in an office or work area, the first concern is for the employees and the public they serve. Should it become necessary to evacuate a building, the Agency will take precautions to guarantee the safety of employees and the public.

Each facility shall have an emergency action plan in accordance with FM 066-3-1. The FEMA Facility Emergency Action Plan shall cover those designated actions FEMA employees must take to ensure employee safety from fire and other emergencies.

American Federation of Government
Employees contract with FEMA

9. WORKING WITH LOCAL COMMUNITY PARTNERS

☑ Your Central Labor Council (CLC) is often the locus of disaster response by the local labor movement. The CLC and local unions address the needs of their members and their neighbors by providing emergency response and by assessing the needs of disaster victims for food, water, housing, transportation, and medical supplies. They can provide skilled volunteers, provide union halls for temporary shelter for people and for the storage and distribution of emergency supplies distribution. The CLC can also be a clearinghouse for member information on disaster relief services and networks with community allies and communities of faith to support their responses.

☑ Contact your local or state government emergency management program to learn who might be local community partners in your area. The website https://www.fema.gov/emergency-management-agencies has contact information for State emergency management agencies and offices. These agencies coordinate the local emergency agencies in your area and can help you locate local partners.

☑ Check with your local American Red Cross for opportunities to partner with them and other local organizations.

☑ Explore creating a union-based CERT team, described in section 3 on page # to integrate your program into the local disaster response organization in your area.

Example of Local Unions Working with Community Partners

In 2018, the Los Angeles Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO and the American Red Cross

Los Angeles Region announced a new partnership to train labor union members to serve as disaster response volunteers in the hours, days, weeks and months after a major disaster.

The partnership's plan is to train 100 union members in emergency response and also to identify union resources and critical union member skills, such heavy equipment operation, that can be strategically deployed following a major disaster.

The agreement is the first of its kind between a labor federation and the American Red Cross. This partnership is supported by Emergency Management Department for the City of Los Angeles and the Los Angeles County Office of Emergency Management.

10. SENDING LOCAL UNION VOLUNTEERS TO DISASTER RECOVERY IN OTHER COMMUNITIES IN THE UNITED STATES AND ABROAD.

SEIU International Union and local unions, such as SEIU Healthcare Pennsylvania, have supported SEIU volunteer nurses, physicians, and other members travel to distant communities in the United States and abroad, to help with recovery efforts after hurricanes and earthquakes.

In 2018, SEIU began a nation-wide partnership with the International Medical Corps (IMC) to provide emergency medical relief to communities in the mainland United States devastated by man-made or natural disasters. SEIU had previously partnered with IMC in disaster responses to Haiti and Puerto Rico.

☑ Healthcare locals interesting in sending member volunteers on deployments after disasters in the US and abroad should contact the International Union.

☑ Locals new to supporting members volunteering for these deployments should begin planning with the International Union and IMC well before disasters occur and the calls for volunteers are made.

☑ IMC will screen and select SEIU members identified by local unions as candidates for deployments. IMC will coordinate all transportation and logistics, provide support, shelter, per diem and security, including appropriate insurance, for deployed volunteers.

☑ SEIU volunteers will not be paid and must make arrangements for their time off from their work before they will be deployed. SEIU local unions may assist members with obtaining leave time from their employers.

☑ All volunteers will be under the direction of IMC staff during deployment and will abide by IMC's Code of Conduct.

☑ Local union disaster programs can assist with these volunteer deployments by recruiting members who want to be candidates and by conducting initial screening, training, negotiating MOUs or contract language with employers, and the debriefings afterwards. Experience from workplace and local community preparedness and response activities will help prepare members for these, often longer and more strenuous, deployments.

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